



State of Louisiana

Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

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State Agencies Host Exercise to Measure Louisiana's Preparedness for Large Scale Disasters

BATON ROUGE, La. – The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and the Louisiana National Guard partnered to host a training exercise to measure Louisiana's readiness to respond to a statewide emergency.

With the 2013 Hurricane Season a little more than two months away, state officials used Saturday's exercise to evaluate the state's ability to respond and level of preparedness. The drill occurred in two locations -- Fontainebleau State Park in St. Tammany parish and the Grand Prairie Rest Area in St. Landry parish.

GOHSEP Director Kevin Davis said, “With hurricane season quickly approaching, this exercise is a chance to focus on the fundamental skills state responders must have to ensure the safety of our people and our communities. Today was about preparing for any kind of natural disaster that comes our way in the coming months.”

Brig. Gen. Glenn H. Curtis, adjutant general of the LANG, said, “The National Guard is ready for this coming hurricane season. The exercise this week tests our [LANG’s] readiness to respond to any emergency. By working closely with all of our partner agencies at the state, federal and local levels, we’ve been able to stress our response plans to ensure that our systems, personnel and equipment are ready for Hurricane season. Our citizens place great faith in all of us to do what we train to do... for our Guardsmen along with the other state and local emergency responders to be ready to protect them and their property in times of emergency.”

The exercise focused on various aspects of response, including coordinating search-and-rescue efforts among agencies. It also tested air, water and ground SAR operations, Lilly Pad operations, parish collections points, communications interoperability and training for Points of Distribution, commonly called PODs.

Other state agencies participating included Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Corrections, Louisiana State Fire Marshal’s Office, Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Health and Hospitals and the Department of Transportation and Development. Local leaders from St. Tammany, St. Landry, Evangeline, St. Martin, Acadia and Vermilion parishes also participated.

The Atlantic Hurricane Season starts on June 1 and runs until November 30. Residents can get information about how to prepare for a hurricane and other common natural hazards at GetAGameplan.org.

The Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) is charged with leading and supporting Louisiana and its Citizens in the preparation for, response to and recovery from all emergencies and disasters. For more information, visit <http://gohsep.la.gov> or follow the agency on Twitter as @GOHSEP and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/gohsep.